

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I wanted to express outrage over Republican efforts to take off the air a commercial that has been running by many of the labor organizations that is critical of the Republican record on Medicare.

As we know, many times Democrats have gotten up here in the House to point out that the cuts proposed by the Republican leadership in Medicare are going to hurt America's seniors and ultimately destroy and eliminate the Medicare Program as we know it. This is nothing more than another effort by the Republican leadership to gag the efforts of working Americans. Essentially, labor unions represent working Americans, who want to tell the truth about Medicare and what the Republicans are proposing to do to a program that is important for seniors, to working people, to those who have to go into nursing homes.

This is not the first time we have seen a Republican effort to gag those who want to speak the truth on the Medicare issue. When the Medicare debate began in my committee, the Committee on Commerce, there was only one hearing on the issue and the senior citizens who showed up to want to speak were arrested. Once again the Republicans are trying to gag the truth on Medicare.

THE PASSING OF HON. HAMILTON FISH, JR., A FORMER MEMBER OF CONGRESS FROM NEW YORK

(Mr. GILMAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, it is my sad duty to inform this body of the passing of our former colleague who was one of the outstanding Members of this body in this century.

Hamilton Fish, Jr., served in this Chamber for over a quarter of a century, from his first election in 1968 until his retirement in 1994. Throughout his career in this House, Ham Fish earned respect on both sides of the aisle and throughout the Nation for his commitments to civil rights and justice, and to commonsense principles of government.

As a member of the House Judiciary Committee, the spotlight of the Nation shown on his wisdom during the hearings on the impeachment of President Nixon. In later years, Ham Fish served as ranking Republican on that committee, where he was known for championing the revision of immigration law and of continuing the battle against prejudice, discrimination, and hate.

Ham Fish brought to this Chamber a sense of dignity and a sense of decency. As the scion of a family whose record of public service goes back to the days of the American Revolution, he compiled a record of which we can all be proud.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to have served with Ham Fish, and I was privileged that Ham was my friend.

To his widow, Mary Ann, to his four children, and to his grandchildren, we extend our deepest condolences. Ham Fish was a true gentleman, and he will be missed.

CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM

(Mrs. MALONEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, the so-called Republican reform bill on campaign finance attempts to solve the problem of too much money in politics by putting much more money in politics.

The Republican bill raises the amount that wealthy contributors can give to Federal candidates to \$72,500 a year. The average American family of four makes \$48,000 a year. Clearly, the Republicans are out of touch with the average working American families.

In sharp contrast, the Democratic bill limits the amount of money in politics by voluntarily limiting contributions, expenditures, and soft money. We need a vote on this bill. This fall, when the American people go to vote, they need to know whether their candidate supports putting more money into politics or limiting the amount of money in politics.

REFORM WELFARE

(Mr. CHABOT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, last week this House once again passed historic welfare reform legislation. Twice before we have passed welfare reform, but twice the President has blocked that reform with his veto pen, even though candidate Clinton said he wanted to end welfare as we know it. Remember that? Mr. President, please tear down this wall to full participation in our society.

Seldom has a government devised a program which has devastated so many lives in this country and only very, very rarely has the law of unintended consequences been so brutally applied. Families have been ripped apart. Attempts to work and save have been penalized, and generation after generation of children have grown up without seeing an adult go to work. This miserable welfare system must not continue. Let us replace welfare with work. Let us replace rigid bureaucracy with community and compassion, and let us replace vetoes with a signing ceremony.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HAYWORTH). The Chair would remind all Members it is appropriate to address remarks to the Chair and not to other persons.

UNITED STATES FINANCES CHINA'S SELLING OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS

(Mr. TRAFICANT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TRAFICANT. Mr. Speaker, in 1995 China was found guilty of selling nuclear weapons to Pakistan. China was then found guilty of building poison gas factories in Iran. Now the CIA tells us that China is selling missiles to Syria. What gets me is we are financing this with \$40 billion a year pumped through most-favored-nation trade status.

What is next here, Congress: Tax breaks for Chinese heroin? How about a good old-fashioned Chinese Communist Party fundraiser on the East Lawn?

I say while we keep turning the other cheek, China is starting to point missiles right at our assets. With friends like this, who needs enemies?

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of any money we have left in the Pentagon budget.

GROWTH RATE OF WELFARE SPENDING ASTRONOMICALLY OUTPACED GROWTH IN POPULATION

(Mr. HEFLEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HEFLEY. Mr. Speaker, since 1950 the population of the United States has increased from 151 million to roughly 260 million. This works out to a 72-percent increase.

Also, since 1950, social welfare spending at all levels of Government has increased from \$18.8 billion a year to \$324 billion a year. This is an increase of 1,623 percent.

In other words, the growth rate of welfare spending has astronomically outpaced the growth in population. Many liberals would argue that this probably is a good thing. But my question is this: What have we purchased with this huge investment in social welfare?

Broken families; a destroyed work ethic; rampant illegitimacy; and continued poverty. Not only is the modern welfare state economically unsound, it is spiritually and morally unsound.

We are doing our part to enact serious reform of welfare. It is time for Bill Clinton to show leadership, to keep his promises to end welfare as we know it.

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AMERICA NEEDS A NEW GARDENER

(Mr. DOGGETT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, what a contrast in Speaker GINGRICH's gardening abilities. When it comes to Medicare, he says, let it wither on the vine.

But when it comes to the special interest money trees here in Washington, he says, water them, fertilize them. Give them lots of fertilizer. Give them tender loving care.

He is all green thumbs for special interest campaign money, for, despite his handshake with President Clinton last year and a very pleasant smile in New Hampshire, he did nothing for months on the issue of campaign finance reform so that nothing would occur in this 1996 election. Then when he finally spoke, his view was that the independent organizations who demanded real reform of our election system, they had it all wrong. What America needs is not less campaign spending but more, lots more campaign spending.

Mr. Speaker, when we look at the issue of reforming this Congress, he said, we will have a week next year and we will call it reform week. That was last week and now it has been canceled. America needs a new gardener.

TRAGEDY HIGHLIGHTS AMERICA'S STRENGTH

(Mr. LAZIO of New York asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LAZIO of New York. Mr. Speaker, as I was leaving the memorial service for the families of the victims of TWA flight 800 yesterday, my heart was touched to see crowds of Long Islanders who could not attend the ceremony lining the roads with signs expressing love and support for those who lost loved ones in this terrible disaster.

The signs read: "We Are Praying for You." "Our Hearts Are With You."

If there is any solace in this calamity, it is that Americans from all walks of life have come together to share in this loss, to offer support, and to care for each other.

Coming together in times of need with a true sense of community is one of the great strengths of our Nation. I cannot help but think of the hundreds of people who went out on the dark ocean the night of the disaster to look for survivors and the thousands of people who have literally worked around the clock without much fanfare.

All these people, rescuers, Red Cross workers, FBI agents, NTSB officials, airline employees, local police, Coast Guard members, medical examiners, grief counselors, and citizens from all over the country who volunteer their time and energy have worked selflessly. Even though they have been burdened by very heavy hearts because of the grim work they are doing, they keep at the job.

I urge all Americans, Mr. Speaker, to acknowledge these continuing efforts on Long Island and to express pride in the spirit that makes our country so great.

REPUBLICANS AND MEDICARE

(Mr. BONIOR asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, last year NEWT GINGRICH said he wanted Medicare to wither on the vine. At the time, both Mr. GINGRICH and his spokesperson, Tony Blankley, said he was referring to Medicare fee-for-service. But now the Republicans are trying to rewrite history. Thirteen separate times the Gingrich Republicans voted to cut Medicare for tax breaks for the wealthiest individuals and corporations in America. Now they are trying to run away from their record. I suppose next they will tell us that Bob Dole did vote for Medicare back in 1965.

This is one more attempt, I might add, Mr. Speaker, by the Republicans to shut down voices. When seniors tried to speak out against Medicare cuts, they were arrested. Now that the labor movement, which has been the champion of working people, has had the courage to tell the truth about the Gingrich agenda and speak out for working families most affected by these cuts, Republicans are trying to silence them.

Republicans can try to shut down voices all they want to, because they are never going to be able to shut down the truth.

INTRODUCTION OF LEGISLATION TO USE CECIL FIELD AS A SITE FOR A VA NATIONAL CEMETERY AND DEVELOPMENT OF A LONG TERM CARE FACILITY

(Mr. STEARNS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, the honorable minority whip knows that the Speaker was not talking about Medicare. He was talking about the Health Care Financing Administration. And in the book "Putting People First," by Mr. GORE and President Clinton, they talked about scrapping the Health Care Financing Administration just as the Speaker did. Now they are accusing the Speaker of talking about Medicare when he was not.

Mr. Speaker, in 1993, Cecil Field Naval Air Station was approved for closure by the President and this Congress. The base has long served the military community of Jacksonville, FL, and its surrounding area.

In order to continue to serve our veterans, I am proposing a bill that would designate 1,500 acres of Cecil Field for a veterans cemetery as well as convert the current barracks into a veterans nursing home. Florida's total veterans population is the second largest in the country and it needs these facilities. So I hope my colleagues will help me to sponsor this new bill to help Cecil Field develop a cemetery for veterans.

Mr. Speaker, in 1993, Cecil Field Naval Air Station was approved for closure by the President and this Congress. This base has long served the military community of Jacksonville, FL, and its surrounding areas. In order to continue to serve our military veterans, I am proposing a bill that will designate 1,500 acres of

Cecil Field for a veterans cemetery, as well as convert the current barracks into a veterans nursing home. Florida's total veterans population is the second largest in the country, with over 274,000 veterans within a 100 mile radius of Cecil Field. The barracks are currently in use, housing naval officers and enlisted personnel, and could easily be converted to a nursing home facility for veterans. It is a tragedy that many veterans who fought to secure our freedom, have had to suffer and sometimes die at home because there was not enough room in the current VA facilities. Likewise, the cemetery would require very little money to start up, and would provide those who valiantly fought for this country with a proper burial. Please join me and support this bill to use our current resources for the good of our veterans.

CUTS IN MEDICARE

(Ms. MCCARTHY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. MCCARTHY. Mr. Speaker, Congress must act to ensure that the Medicare Program remains solvent for current beneficiaries as well as future generations. Cuts in the House leadership Medicare proposal would result in reductions to our seniors by decreasing services and increasing costs.

The House leadership proposal includes provisions that would allow doctors to charge seniors more out-of-pocket costs and medical savings accounts which would further exacerbate the program's solvency. We must remain committed to ensuring that seniors have access to high quality, affordable health services. It is time for Congress to get serious about protecting Medicare. We should establish an independent bipartisan commission to analyze these issues and provide recommendations to Congress that would protect the long-term solvency of this program.

Let us solve the Medicare problem by working in a bipartisan method to get the job done, not have it wither on the vine as the Speaker would have it.

THE TRUTH ABOUT MEDICARE

(Mr. KINGSTON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, there is an old saying that when you cannot dazzle people with your brilliance, you baffle them with your bull. Certainly that seems to be the theme of the Democrat Party today, . . . one after the other, saying that the Speaker said Medicare should wither on the vine.

They know, as do their AFL-CIO comrades, that the statement was that HCFA, the Health Care Financing Administration, would wither on the vine. This thing is so important that even television stations have taken this AFL-CIO-Democrat ad off the air because it is a lie.

It is amazing, when they speak with such forked tongue, that they come up here and ask for bipartisanship . . .